



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

THE CORNERSTONE

Ridgebury Congregational Church
605 Ridgebury Road
Ridgefield, CT 06877

From the Pastor

Ave Ridgeburians!

I've changed the masthead on the Sunday bulletin. You know what the masthead is: it's the part at the top of the bulletin that tells you what week of the Christian Year it is, what day of the week it is, and reminds you that I'm the Minister and Jean is the Music Director—yeah, that's the masthead.

Anyway, the last thing in the masthead used to be a little blurb asking folks to keep quiet before the service starts, but last week that went out, and in came a quote from Daniel Burnham, one of my favorite architects, that reads, "Make no small plans, for they have no power to stir men's souls." If you noticed that last week, you might have thought, "What's up with this?"

Well, here's what's up with that.

As I mentioned in my sermons on Rally Weekend, and as I mentioned in last month's *Cornerstone*, our congregation stands at something of a crossroads. Thanks to God's faithfulness to us, we are no longer the same little church we were when I came here a couple of years ago: we're larger, we're better off financially, we have started new programs and activities, and there's a new feeling of optimism and enthusiasm. But while it's true we're not the same church we were, it's also true we're not yet the church we're going to become—and that gives us a remarkable opportunity, the opportunity: to determine just what sort of church God is calling us to become. It's an opportunity to pray and seek God's will—and it's also an opportunity to dream and imagine. It's an opportunity, but it's also a challenge.

It's a challenge because, if you're familiar with the biblical stories about God calling people, you know God is forever calling people to do things those people are positive they can't actually do. It's not like God calls somebody to God's service and the person God has called responds by saying something like, "No problem God, just let me grab my good sandals and I'll be right with you!" Rather, people tend to respond by saying something like, "Me? Do that? No offense, God, but what are you, nuts? There's no way I can do that!" And the interesting thing is, most of those people are right. On their own, they can't do whatever God is calling them to do—but the larger point is, that since it's God who's calling them, whatever they can't do in their own strength, they can do with God's help. The Bible is full of stories of perfectly ordinary people who end up doing the most extraordinary things, and all because they trust God to be faithful in helping them do whatever it is they've been called to do.

And that's important for us, because I think in the months and years to come God is going to call us to do remarkable things, and because I think right now God is calling us to think, imagine, and dream remarkable things—things we probably can't do with our own strength, but that we can do with the help of God, who can strengthen us to do anything.

So, as you think about our congregation's future, let me encourage you to take Daniel Burnham's advice to heart. Dream big. Imagine big. Make big plans for our congregation's future. Don't limit your thinking by saying to yourself, "We're just a little church, so we can't do big things," because that's just not true. It is true that we're a small church, but it's also true that we're a bigger church than we were just a few brief years ago, and even small churches can do big things—if they trust in God's ability to help them realize their dreams.

Cheers,

John



Bible truth: We are never too old to know Jesus better.

Bible verse: Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

Keeping this in mind, I would like to introduce you to six very wonderful young people: Connor Rowe, Taylor Wray, Kurt Steidl, Amanda Grose, Taylor Stroili and Tyler Welton. This is our new Confirmation class.

We have met once for a potluck dinner with confirmands, their parents, the mentors and our minister. Classes will now begin with meetings twice a month on Sunday evenings.

Members of Ridgebury Church who have agreed to be mentors are: Elizabeth Sganga, Carole Bishop, RoseMary Frederick, Bill Lucas, Barbara Kapp, Sally Yarrish and Sharon Straiton.

I ask that each of you support their growth and knowledge to learn more about God and to live the way God wants us to live.

You will see them participate in our worship services, become a part of our church community and interact with each of you on different occasions.

Please remember—that it takes a long time for a tree to grow big and strong, sometimes hundreds of years. It will take every one of us to give our support to these young people to help them grow and to realize how proud we are of each of them for their decision to become part of this Confirmation class.

Don't forget our Saturday Vespers Services (5pm). The format is different than on Sunday mornings, and remember after the sermon you get to ask the minister questions. The discussion period is very informative and sometimes very lively. If you have never attended a Saturday evening service, give us a try.

Adult discussion groups will be starting up soon. If you are interested, let Rev. Heeckt or any Deacon know you are interested.

I would like to close with this prayer—Lord, we thank you that you made our bodies to grow. And we thank you that our spirits grow as well. Help us to know you better and never get tired of growing in grace. Amen.

= God Bless,

Sharon Straiton

Chairman of Deacons

LADIES' ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER

December 3, 2008

Chuck's Steak House

20 Segar Street, Danbury, CT

Please mark Wednesday December 3rd on your calendar and plan to attend our annual Ladies' Christmas dinner. This is always a great time to get together for food, fellowship and fun!

We will gather at Chuck's Steak House at 6:30 PM. Dinner will be served at 7:00 PM.

Stay tuned. More details about the cost of the dinner and choice of entrees will be coming in October and November.



Fall is definitely upon us, way too fast for me, but then that's usually how it goes for me. "So much to do, so little time". It's also a beautiful time of year. The air is so crisp and the sharp colors of the leaves on trees seem to glow. I'm sure that Ridgebury Church will glow and grow right along with the season.

As I'm sure you've noticed, attendance in church has grown which is a welcome and wonderful happening. This new attendance does mean that some folks joining us at coffee hour in Shields Hall do not know anyone. We must make sure that everyone feels included. Please take a moment each Sunday to look around and see who you can share some time with. Our visitors, whether here for a day or planning to stay, are fascinating folks and it's great to get to know them.

Our coffee hours after the service are wonderful mixers for people before they head out for the rest of the day and week. It offers us a chance weave our everyday lives together with our faith journey. If you would like to help organize a social hour, please let any Deacon or me know and we can set you up with a "buddy" if you've never done it before. For all you other "master coffee providers", check the sign up sheets on the bulletin boards and look for an open week. Thanks in advance for your help!

Christ's love be with you,

Elizabeth Sganga



As we approach the month of October, be on the lookout for a communication from the Stewardship Committee regarding the campaign. The three weeks leading up to November 16, which will be Stewardship Sunday, will culminate in a potluck brunch following worship service that Sunday. As we approach this important year, what year isn't, we want everyone to think of their commitment to Ridgebury Church. If you're like me, you'll realize what Ridgebury has meant to all of us. We are blessed to have this vital, enriching, friendly and warm church as part of our lives. Thanks for listening!

Somebody once said there are only two kinds of people in the world. There are those who wake up in the morning and say, "Good morning, Lord," and those who wake up in the morning

FROM THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Mission Committee welcomes your participation in two exciting upcoming events. These two events are related, so here's some advance info to ponder. At the December Missions Fair there will be a Heifer Project table which offers folks the opportunity to purchase animals, trees, tools, etc. for the benefit of our neighbors in poverty-stricken areas, including the U.S. The money from the item(s) purchased is used to provide food to the recipients and also provides a source of income for them. The Heifer Project is guided by a strong set of principles, including building sustainability to the area,, health and nutrition education for humans and animals, and environmentally sound practices. If you'd like to know more about this project, visit heifer.org; or consider joining the Sunday School classes on the trip to Overlook Farm (a Heifer Project farm) in October. The members of the Mission Committee are sure you'll be pleased by what you learn of this worthy project and the opportunities available to support it.

The Mission Committee



Just a reminder, the Church Work day is October 18th at 8:30. Lunch will be provided.

Many hands are needed!!!

Pasta Dinner
Night ...

To all our members,
their family and friends,
Please join us for a
grand Pasta Dinner with Salad
and Refreshments.

October 18th
at 6:30 p.m.
Shields Hall

Ridgebury Congregational Church

OCTOBER Birthdays



- 2 Betty Miller
- 9 Connor Rowe
- 11 Nellie Clapper
- 13 Pam Rittenhouse
- 18 Barbara Grose
- 20 Rich Straiton
- 26 Sean Rowe
- Matt Orr
- 29 Leslie Marker
- 30 Bob Dever

Office Telephone: 203-748-2806
Visit our Web Site: www.ridgeburychurch.org
E-mail Us: Office@Ridgeburychurch.org

October 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 11a Missions Committee 5p Confirmation Class	29	30	1 7:30p Choir Practice	2 7:15p AA Meets	3	4 5p Vespers Service
5 Family Sunday 10a Service with Communion	6 7p Deacons Meet	7	8 7:30p Choir Practice	9 7:15p AA Meets	10	11 5p Vespers Service
12	13 7p Trustees <i>Columbus Day [USA]</i>	14	15 7:30p Choir Practice	16 7:15p AA Meets	17	18 8:30a Fall Cleanup Day 5p Vespers Service 6:30p Spaghetti Dinner for Members and Friends
19 5p Confirmation Class	20 7p Council Meeting	21	22 7:30p Choir Practice	23 7:15p AA Meets	24	25 5p Vespers Service
26 11a Missions Committee 5p Confirmation Class 11:30p Budget Meeting	27	28	29 7:30p Choir Practice	30 7:15p AA Meets	31 <i>Halloween [USA]</i>	1 5p All Saint's Day service <i>All Saints' Day [Christian]</i>